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AN ODE ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL, &c.

BRITISH MUSEUM

AN

ODE

ON THE

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL:

OCCASIONED BY THE OPINIONS

OF

DR. PRIESTLEY.

AND

LIFE,

AN ELEGY.

BY THE REV. JOHN WALTERS, M.A.
MASTER OF RUTHIN SCHOOL, AND LATE FELLOW OF
JESUS COLLEGE, OXFORD.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

AN

ODE TO HUMANITY,

FOUNDED ON THE STORY OF SCIPIO.

BY THE REV. JOHN WALTERS, SEN.
RECTOR OF LANDOUGH, GLAMORGANSHIRE.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

SHORTLY WILL BE PUBLISHED,

A NEW EDITION

OF

TRANSLATED SPECIMENS

OF

ANCIENT WELSH POETRY,

IN

ENGLISH VERSE.

TO WHICH WILL BE ADDED,

TRANSLATIONS

OF

THE LATIN PIECES

OF

MR. GRAY.

BRITISH MUSEUM

O D E

ON THE

IMMORTALITY

OF THE

S O U L.

YE who the ſickly couch attend
That holds a parent, brother, friend,
The mournful ſcene of death;
Where each in mute affliction hangs
To ſoothe departing nature's pangs,
And ſtay the fleeting breath:

Say, is there not ſome ſecret cauſe
Unknown, that in that anxious pauſe
The ſtruggling boſom chears;
That blends conſolement with your ſighs,
And hiding horror from your eyes
To rapture turns your tears?

Oh

Oh yes! 'tis Heaven's undoubted ſign,
Tis mighty Reaſon's voice divine,
    Tis Nature's wakeful cry;
That diſſipates each impious fear,
And glad proclaims in accents clear,
    The Soul can never die.

Oh ne'er the ſacred hope forego,
That mingling comfort with your woe
    Makes death no more abhorr'd;
That kindly whiſpers to your pain
That you erelong ſhall meet again,
    In happier worlds reſtor'd.

That thought the flame of life will feed,
Through fate's dark labyrinth will lead,
    By wiſeſt Mercy given;
Will bleſs our ſcarce-believing eyes
With proſpects opening to the Skies,
    And doubtleſs hopes of Heaven.

Then,

Then, PRIESTLEY, ceaſe with ſceptic gloom
To darken the myſterious doom
Of pale and dying man;
Nor aim with philoſophic fears
To bound our endleſs length of years
In life's contracted ſpan.

And wilt thou with thy ſubtle ſchemes,
Thy viſions, and deiſtic dreams,
The doubting mind enſnare;
The hopes of parting friends diſpel,
And bid them take their laſt farewel,
And heap on grief deſpair?

Vain Reaſoner, ſay! as through the air
Thy better genius roams, for there
Offended Truth approves;
Say, how th' electric fire purſues
Each form, its ſpirit to infuſe,
And through creation moves.

Haſt

Haſt thou not taught that, ſtill eſtrang'd,
From ſubſtance to new ſubſtance chang'd,
The ſubtle fluid flies;
That hence to fire the clouds it darts,
And ſtrike with terror mortal hearts
In lightnings from the ſkies?

Oh falſe! to dream the active Soul,
Which from the centre to the pole
Expatiates unconfin'd;
Which can to other orbits climb,
Outſtrip the flight of ſpace and time,
And leave theſe worlds behind;

That like the body's mouldering frame,
The Soul, whoſe pure, eſſential flame
Is Heaven's imparted breath;
Should waſte in mute oblivion's ſhade,
To ſome dark, dreary ſpot convey'd,
The narrow houſe of death:

Or

Or haply, lingering ages paſt,
To life and light reſtor'd at laſt,
From cold obſtruction clear'd;
Like ancient lamps in tombs unſeen,
Should glimmer out the ſpace between,
Unchearing and unchear'd.

More wiſe the erring Papiſt's ſoul
Would wander to its heavenly goal
Through fierce and penal fires;
Stung with deſire of life to come,
Impatient to ſurvive the tomb,
And join the ſainted choirs.

Through abject India's utmoſt bounds
The univerſal ſtrain reſounds,
And hails the ſoul reſtor'd:
When burns the pile, the faithful dame
Flies to participate the flame
With her departed lord:

Not

Not that in urns of ſculptur'd ſtone
With aſhes dearer than her own
Her cold remains may lie,
But that their ſhades the nuptial wreath
May weave in Paradiſe, nor death
Th' eternal band untie.

In Scandinavia's ancient reign
Stretch'd endleſs to the frozen main
Beneath the polar ſky,
A race of ſavage heroes fought;
And all with equal ardor ſought
To conquer or to die:

For after mighty actions done,
And victory by their valour won,
And battle's glorious fall,
They thought in other worlds and times
To quaff, and chant their Runic rhymes
In Odin's wondrous hall.

Hence

Hence ruſh'd they fearleſs on the foe
To ſtrike or meet the mortal blow,
As fate's dark brink they trod,
With mighty joy reſign'd their breath,
And laugh'd in the laſt pangs of death,
And hail'd their country's god:

Nor deem'd that dogs, or birds of prey,
Or men more cruel far than they
In battle's dreadful ſtrife,
Or Lok's laſt flame itſelf had power
Their ardent ſpirits to devour,
And hearts profuſe of life.

This beam on pagan fablers ſhone.
Laertes' and Anchiſes' ſon
Pale Hades' realms invade,
By Homer and by Maro led
To pierce the regions of the dead,
And claſp a parent's ſhade.

This beam, this genius from the ſky
Inſpir'd great Socrates to die,
Though foes the draught infuſe;
And breath'd contempt of age and pain
In Tully's philoſophic ſtrain,
And Plato's heavenly muſe.

Unchain'd, and from the body free
How oft from earth their ſouls would flee,
In midnight's myſtic dreams,
Where one broad day in ether ſmiles;
Or ſeek the bleſt Atlantic iſles
Beyond the ocean's ſtreams.

The Martyrs, holy men of old,
All in the book of life enroll'd,
And Saints imparadis'd,
Hence, by no ſhape of death deterr'd
Would all, with longing prayers preferr'd,
Depart, and be with Chriſt.

Though

Though ſcourg'd, and ſton'd, and crucify'd,
Their ſouls, in that ſore conflict try'd,
No tortures could deſtroy;
Fierce beaſts their mangled members tore,
Yet they with meekeſt patience bore
And counted all for joy:

Gave thanks to God's three Powers profound
That they, though mean, were worthy found,
By Heaven's own viſions fir'd,
To ſuffer for their holy names;
Then, in the midſt of ſcorching flames,
Sang praiſes, and expir'd.

Why ſhould I tell, how, from the dead,
Chriſt 'mid his choſen ſtood, and ſaid,
Triumphant o'er the grave,
While yet their fear their Lord diſowns,
" A ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones,
" As ye do ſee I have:"

How he, the heir of Sion's kings,
On winds and clouds and cherubs' wings
To Heaven ſublimely rode;
Or how in ages long before
A firy car Elijah bore,
And Enoch walk'd with God?

Have we not read, in wiſdom's lays,
That few and evil are the days
From man's firſt infant birth;
That to a better land we ſteer,
But ſtrangers and but pilgrims here,
And ſojourners on earth?

That when our tale of years is o'er
And life's vain ſhadow fleets no more,
Unquench'd the ſpirit burns;
And while this frail and mortal frame
Reſolves to earth from which it came,
To Him that gave, returns.

Sweet

Sweet hope ſerene! without thy ſmile
For who could e'er thoſe toils beguile
That here no period know;
Could danger's awful form ſuſtain,
Chill penury, diſtorted pain,
And death's untimely blow?

In pity to our cries prepar'd
Lo here the ſure and laſt reward
Of life's unnumber'd woes!
Believe the Saviour's bleſt decree,
" Behold, this day thou ſhalt with me
" In Paradiſe repoſe."

Know that, in God's own image clad,
Man firſt was like the Angels made,
And only leſs than they:
Nor think, though fall'n, he in his fall
Like the mute beaſts ſhall periſh all,
And all his thoughts decay.

Then

Then ſtrive not, with falſe Reaſon's ſhows,
The voice of ages to oppoſe,
And nature's laws controul;
Nor ſeek to quench, with impious aim,
The inextinguiſhable flame
Of man's immortal Soul.

The cloud-capt towers ſhall periſh all,
The gorgeous palaces ſhall fall,
And none their place ſhall find;
The ſolemn temples ſhall decay,
The mighty globe itſelf give way,
Nor leave a wreck behind:

This curious, this majeſtic frame,
This lamp that fed the vital flame,
This angel form it wore,
Which for its beauty well might have
A fairer manſion than the grave,
Shall duſt to duſt reſtore:

The ſtars of heaven ſhall fire the pole,
The wheeling ſpheres forget to roll,
The ſun forſake the ſky,
And with him draw the planets down:
Amidſt the wreck of worlds, alone,
The Soul ſhall never die.

Father of Spirits! at thy call
When the great deſtiny of all
This body ſhall fulfil;
My ſoul to thee, unerring Lord,
Shall come, according to thy word,
Obedient to thy will:

And while, to chear my further way,
One glimpſe of this celeſtial ray,
This bleſt belief, be mine;
Unreſting doubt's inſidious art
Shall ne'er from my reluctant heart
Extort that hope divine.

L I F E.

AN

E L E G Y.

FAIR are the ſcenes that Nature's empire yields,
The ſtores that all her flowery haunts adorn;
The breath of vernal fragrance in her fields,
The ſmile of evening, and the bluſh of morn:

Fair are Life's placid cares, its ſocial hours,
Its fond endearments, and its mild repoſe,
The peace of pure affection's nuptial bowers,
And all the bliſs domeſtic concord knows:

Fair are the beams of friendſhip's bright'ning eye,
Sweet modeſty, the bluſhing foe of art,
The ſoul enlarg'd of warm philanthropy,
And beauty's bloom, and youth's ingenuous heart.

Yes, they are fair, and fraught with large delight,
Yes, they are themes my ſerious ſoul admires:

May

May time's rude hand ne'er ſnatch them from my ſight,
Nor quench the zeal of virtue's young deſires.

Reflection comes, with truth's impartial frown,
And all the viſionary ſcene deſtroys,
Tears the bright gems from fancy's glittering crown,
And mars the blooming promiſe of our joys.

In vain the Muſe hath built her fairy plan;
Severe Philoſophy contracts her brow,
Th' illuſion mocks, and tells unthinking man
How vain the hope of happineſs below.

But though nor calm Reflection's form appear,
Nor ſage Philoſophy her lore impart,
Yet ſure Experience, rugged nurſe, is near
To ſtamp her leſſon on the bleeding heart.

Behold how ſoon the tranſient ſcenes recede,
How ſoon rich Autumn's golden gleams decay,
Cold Winter deſolates the pictur'd mead,
And all the bright creation fades away!

But ah! that each ſweet paſſion ſhould expire,
The luxury of tender thought be o'er!
Loſt the ſoft thrill of innocent deſire!
And love, and youth, and beauty be no more!

Their fleeting influence no new morn recalls
From the pale ſhades of night's funereal cave;
No ſpring reſtores, but ruthleſs fate inthralls
And folds for ever in the wintry grave.

Ah ſee how low the ſon of genius lies,
And yields in ſad obſcurity his breath;
Condemn'd to feel, ere manhood's prime ariſe,
The cruel, cold, arreſting hand of Death!

Unknown to fame (but fame he ne'er deſir'd),
Far from his youth's dear native walks remov'd,
No pitying look from her his ſoul admir'd,
No ſtrain of ſolace from the muſe he lov'd.

Far other proſpects chear'd his opening morn,
To hope's glad eye far other ſcenes aroſe:

Life's

Life's noon mature, which health and joy adorn,
And her calm evening crown'd with due repoſe.

Thee too, Aurelia, thee Death's clay-cold hand
Leads young and beauteous to his dreary bower;
For thee the graves their ſacred glooms expand,
Breathe on thy bloom, and blight thy opening flower:

While yon pale Maid, with ſorrow-ſtreaming eyes,
With tears that warm from wounded friendſhip flow,
Kneels on the turf, and O bleſt ſhade! ſhe cries,
And ſinks to earth in extaſy of woe.

Kind Sympathy beholds; and on the ſcene,
Life's mournful picture, ſheds the pitying tear;
Sore troublous thoughts meanwhile with anguiſh keen
Seize the ſaid ſoul of comfortleſs deſpair.

Yet oh, revive! behold a welcome gleam,
Hope's ruddy dayſpring, in the Eaſt ariſe
To chear our path, till Faith's immortal beam
Deſcend in full effulgence from the ſkies!

Each dark diſtruſt, each gloomy fear diſpel
From the pure breaſt which holy hope inſpires:
Hear Addiſon in dying whiſpers tell,
"Lo in what peace a Chriſtian's life expires."

Beyond life's narrow joys, beyond the tomb,
Exalt the ſoul to endleſs joys above,
Virtue's fair form, and Beauty's heavenly bloom,
Unfading Youth, and everlaſting Love.

How poor, how ſunk will then theſe worlds appear,
Then, when yon dazzled orb ſhall fail to ſhine,
When nature's voice no more ſhall charm the ear,
Loſt in the ſpheres of harmony divine.

Reflection pains no more the muſing mind,
Sad Elegy no more awakes the ſigh;
Fain would I leave theſe tranſient ſcenes behind,
And lift a ſtrain of triumph to the ſky.

O D E

TO

H U M A N I T Y.

AT the taking of NEW CARTHAGE in Spain, when SCIPIO was but twenty-four years of age, there was among the captives a young lady of diſtinguiſhed beauty, who by the laws of war became his indiſputable prize. But finding, upon enquiry, that ſhe had been eſpouſed to a prince of the country, who was himſelf alſo a captive, and in the laſt agonies of deſpair on her account, the noble Roman reſtored her unviolated to her huſband, and her huſband to his liberty and kingdom.

LIVY. B. 26. Ch. 50.

I.

SEE yon angelic face
With genuine luſtre ſhine!
I could with tranſport ever gaze
Upon the form divine.

The thrice-illuſtrious maid,
In native charms array'd,
No decoration needs;

An ever-conſtant foe
To glitt'ring pomp and ſhow,
In words as well as deeds.

She ne'er can ſee a wretch in pain
But guſhing ſorrows flow;
Nor does the tender nymph diſdain
To weep another's woe.

She, when kind fortune o'er our woe prevails
To wear the ſmiles of ſympathy is known,
Nor joy nor grief the human heart aſſails,
But ſhe ſtill makes each joy, each grief, her own;
In every nation, clime, and age, the ſame;
Unlimited her praiſe, Humanity her name.

II.

Where uncontroll'd chill winter reigns,
And binds the glebe in icy chains,
The ardent fires of her affections glow;
Where Sol emits indignant rays,
And ſcorching heat to earth conveys,
The cooling Zephyrs of her goodneſs blow.

No region can her clemency confine,
Nor country her benignity reſtrain,
No ſeaſon check her generous deſign,
Nor limits her benevolence contain.

She, like the Sun, with undiſtinguiſh'd beams
Pours forth on all exhilarating gleams,
And foſt'ring influence ſheds;
Diſtreſs ſhe viſits with relieving hands;
She, like the heavens, her bounteous vail expands,
And all mankind o'erſpreads.

Of ſect and party ſhe diſclaims
The narrow bounds and odious names;
But univerſal harmony purſues:
All unconfin'd with free embrace
She comprehends; the human race
With pitying eye impartially ſhe views;
With equal ear ſhe hears the cries of all;
Enough for her that wants for her aſſiſtance call.

III.

No talents can avail,
Unguided by her ray;
Without her all endowments fail,
Droop, wither, and decay.

Pale envy, pining at another's weal,
She never yet admitted for a gueſt;
Nor could ſuſpicion ever yet conceal
Her canker'd head within the virgin's breaſt.

Here fell detraction, hideous fiend,
Admiſſion never gain'd;
Here injur'd merit ever finds a friend,
Is ever entertain'd.

When ſhe within no longer ſhines,
In reaſon's eye, external beauties fade,
The radiance of the brighteſt parts declines,
And dwindles to a ſhade.

If, forc'd by vice, ſhe hides her face,
Fair honour ſinks to foul diſgrace,
Rare flowers to vileſt weeds;
Dominion turns to lawleſs ſway,
Zeal ſtoops each bigot to obey,
Wild anarchy ſucceeds:
Religion's widely-celebrated fame,
Without her aid divine, is nothing but a name.

IV.

With her immortal charms
Was the brave Roman won,
Who ſtood invincible in arms
Like great Bellona's ſon.

The meek-ey'd goddeſs from afar
Deſcried this thunderbolt * of war
Amid the martial train;
Of her approach the wond'ring crowd

* Scipiades belli fulmen, Carthaginis horror. Lucr. Lib. 3.
Duo fulmina belli----Scipiadas. Virg. Æn. Lib. 6.
Imperii noſtri duo fulmina, Cn. et P. Scipiones. Cic. Orat. pro C. Balbo.

Applaud

Applaud the mild effects aloud,
But ſeek the cauſe in vain.

With look ſerene ſhe caught the hero's eye,
Of all its terror ſoon his brow diſarm'd;
With gentle ſteps and mildeſt mien drew nigh,
And all his breaſt with kind compaſſion warm'd.

Before her face vindictive rage expir'd,
Each tender paſſion ſeiz'd his ſoul,
There pity reign'd without controul,
While each oppreſſive thought in haſte retir'd,
And ſentiments divine the godlike man inſpir'd.

V.

The faireſt piece that nature's eaſy hand
E'er form'd, or ſofteſt pencil ever drew,
See here, diſtreſsful ſight! a captive ſtand,
Trembling and pale amid the martial crew.

That more than mortal luſtre of her eyes,
Deſtin'd, alas! to be the victor's prize,
Without concern what ſtoic can ſurvey?

Ah!

Ah! while thoſe tears in ſtreams inceſſant flow,
Expreſſive emblem of her ceaſeleſs woe,
Ev'n apathy ſenſation muſt betray.

What glimpſe of hope for her remains?
Her hapleſs lover ſee in chains,
The powerful prince no more!
Hear him, regardleſs of his own,
Affected with her fate alone,
In loud laments her miſery deplore!

My kingdom loſt by Heaven's ſevere decree!
But what are kingdoms, what are worlds, to thee?
I pleas'd would bear, would bleſs, the galling chain;
Could that, my love, thy liberty regain.
But I deſpair; oh ſnatch, ye fates, my breath;
Yield me the ſad, the ſure, the laſt relief of death.

VI.

Grief's mournful accents reach the hero's ear,
Its various forms affect his pitying eye;
And Scipio gains a nobler triumph here,
Than where before him mighty armies fly.

Victorious

Victorious o'er each ſtubborn foe
In Mars' tremendous fields,
Now vanquiſh'd by this ſcene of woe
His heart to pity yields.

Heavens! how the victor charms the liſtening throng!
From coldeſt hearts what warm applauſe,
Unſought, each flowing period draws,
Mild as the man, and as the warrior ſtrong!

No, no, my friends! I ever ſhall diſdain
A pleaſure purchas'd with another's pain.
Let not a veil be o'er my glory drawn,
And check its ſplendor in its early dawn.
O prince, ſo bleſt with fortune's ſmiles ſo late,
Now doom'd to know this ſad reverſe of fate:
By war's decrees this beauteous maid is mine,
Thy promis'd bride, whoſe charms are all divine;
With whom I could in Hymen's ſacred bands
Enraptur'd join my heart as well as hands:
But love ſtands check'd, Humanity preſides

O'er

O'er each warm wiſh, and every paſſion guides;
And while the goddeſs bids me to refrain,
Youth ſues unheard, and love ſhall plead in vain.
With triumphs pleas'd, yet ſway'd by mercy more,
I quell to free, and conquer to reſtore.
Brave prince, in chains no longer doom'd to pine,
Thy freedom, kingdom, bride, and all, are thine:
And while thy eyes ſurvey theſe heavenly charms
Be ſtill a friend to Rome's victorious arms.

He ceas'd; the dome with acclamations rung;
Of ſuch unrival'd goodneſs the ſurpriſe
With peals of praiſes fill'd the diſtant ſkies;
The pleaſing theme of every gentle tongue.

Hence when the virtuous chief expires
His deeds ſurvive the tomb,
And ſeat him with his noble ſires
The demigods of Rome:
Admiring ages hence record his name,
And jarring nations join to celebrate his fame.

VII.

The northern bears ſhall quit the pole,
And drop into the main;
The wheels of time forget to roll,
And Chaos mount his ancient throne again:
Ere thy fair deeds ſhall in oblivion rot,
Or envy's tooth obliterate thy name;
Ere thy due praiſe, great Scipio, is forgot,
Or ſtands the ſecond in the rolls of fame.

In Livy's worth-recording page,
Tranſmitted down through every age,
Thy deathleſs virtues ſhine;
Superior to great Maro's lays,
Expreſſion ſinks beneath thy praiſe,
Beneath thy deeds divine.

Thy great exploits Fame's clarion ſhall rehearſe,
While both the poles re-echo to the ſound,
And bards ſhall ſing in many a deathleſs verſe,
And for th' attempt for ever be renown'd.

Extending Science on her eagle wings
To Lybian ſhores thy ſtory ſhall convey;
Fez ſhall receive the welcome gift ſhe brings,
And joy to read her ſavage ſoul away.

India ſhall trace the features of thy mind,
And in the act imbibe tranſmuting fire;
Each paſſion thence, each mental power, refin'd,
To deeds like thine ſhe nobly ſhall aſpire.

Thoſe valiant ſouls whom martial glory warms
Thy monuments inſatiably explore;
Scipio the great, th' invincible in arms,
The ſons of Mars from age to age adore;
But the Humane ſhall live, when Mars ſhall be no more.

F I N I S.

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